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E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/05/2018

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SUBJECT: UPDATE ON AIRLIFT AND MISSING ASSETS FOR UNAMID

Classified By: Ambassador Rosemary A. DiCarlo for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: USUN Military Staff Committee (MSC) Political Officer and Senior advisor for Special Envoy's office spoke with UN Secretariat Staff regarding the US airlift offers and the Ethiopian helicopter pledge. UN officials told USUN (1) 60% deployment by year end is contingent upon US airlift and (2) Ethiopian helicopters can not be used in Darfur unless they are upgraded with night flying capabilities. End Summary.

12. (C) U.S. AIRLIFT

In a meeting with Lt Col Tim House of UN Force Generation Services, US reps (political officer, military advisor and Senior advisor for Special Envoy's office) discussed the status of UNAMID's deployment following a Friends of UNAMID meeting with U/SYG Malcorra on 10/30 (Septel).

3.(C) The FGS officer said the outstanding U.S. offer of airlift is "vital" and that the UN objective of 60 percent UNAMID deployment by the end of 2008 will not be met without the U.S. provision of airlift. He was referring to the offers to airlift the backlog of containers of equipment from El Obeid into Darfur. He reiterated that the request was made of the United States to provide reimbursable airlift because of the ability of the United States to provide political pressure on TCCs and the GOS and expedite the deployment.

14. (C) The FGS officer argued that some discussions about UNAMID's deployment have irresponsibly focused on troop numbers as opposed to operational capacity. The U.S. airlift of equipment (Rwandan equipment and containers from El Obeid) will ensure that incoming peacekeepers are not just added boots on the ground -- it will expedite the provision of equipment necessary to improve the mission's capabilities.

15. (C) HELICOPTERS: A STEP FORWARD ON ETHIOPIAN ATTACK HELO The missing assets for UNAMID were also addressed by the FGS officer, who said the key priority is Ethiopia's pledge of five attack helicopters. This pledge has not yet translated into a concrete offer due to the need for night vision modifications.

16. (C) FGS responded favorably to a suggestion that the United States could send an assessment mission to Addis with a representative from a partner country to determine the scope of the night vision modifications necessary prior to deployment. USUN MilAd again raised this issue with likely contributors in a Friends of UNAMID informal discussion on 11/6. The UKUN mil ad responded that the UK is interested in contributing 1 million (pounds) toward Ethiopian

modifications and would like to proceed with an assessment mission to Addis to determine the scope, cost and timeline for modifications. UN representatives at the Friends of UNAMID meeting asked to be included on this assessment trip if and when it occurs. USUN/MSC is prepared to send a representative on such a visit and recommends action be taken quickly in order to secure the UK contribution, which must be obligated by the end of 2008.

Khalilzad